**Dr. Matthews PSYC 100-02 Section Writing Assessment**

**Due in Notebowl 11:59 PM (sharp!), Wednesday September 13th**

**Worth 64 Points**

Integrative Essay on Section One of our Course

This assignment will improve your writing, and refine your ability to integrate ideas in psychology. Begin by viewing the following 2017 TED-Talk entitled, “[Behave: The Biology of our Best & Worst Selves](https://www.ted.com/talks/robert_sapolsky_the_biology_of_our_best_and_worst_selves#t-918165)” by Stanford University Professor [Robert Sapolsky](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Sapolsky).

Based on the above-shown video write a ~1,000 word essay that follows this format:

**Thesis 🡪 Demonstration 🡪 Conclusion.**

Please include “Thesis”, “Demonstration”, and “Conclusion” sub-titles in your essay.

Your **thesis** must be related to one or more ideas expressed or implied in the above-shown video. ([This link can help you develop your thesis](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/545/01/).) Your **demonstration** must contain evidence and/or arguments from the above-shown video, *and also course concepts from any of our videos, PowerPoint files, lectures, in-class demonstrations or discussions, labs, etc., since the first day of class.* Your **conclusion** must follow logically from your thesis and demonstration.

**Rubric:** Y**our grade will be based on the novelty and persuasiveness of your prose, and on writing style (i.e., grammar, clarity, succinctness, organization, and transitions; see additional stylistic issues listed on the back of this page). Also, your grade will be based on how successfully you *integrate disparate ideas*, and demonstrate an understanding of the above-shown video and whichever course concepts you choose to include.**

Use a ‘Times New Roman’ font, a ‘12’ point size and double spacing. **Your essay must be between 900-1,100 (inclusive) words in length. At the end of your essay, please report your word count. Example: “Word Count = 1,049”.** In MS Word, you can determine the word count by highlighting your text, and selecting “word count” from the “Review” tab.

At 11:59 PM (sharp!) on the above-shown assigned day, an electronic copy of the writing assignment –as an MS WORD file (not a link, not a google doc, not a PDF)– is due in Notebowl. An exactly matching paper copy is due at the start of class (Sharp!) the following day, when we will conduct a peer-to-peer Writing Workshop on your essay. Please be punctual to facilitate our teamwork.

Note: Your assignment must have a cover page indicating your **Slayter Box Number** (not your name), **Date**, **September Writing Assessment**, **Dr. Matthews,** and **PSYC 100-02.** To avoid delays, print your essay at least several hours before it’s due in class. Also, the pages of the assignment must be stapled ***before*** coming to class. Please don’t be late. ☺

The assignment is worth 64 points of the 1,000 possible points for the course. Based on the above rubric, essays that I deem “satisfactory” for a course at an academically challenging college like ours will earn 72% of the 100 points. Your essay will earn more or fewer points to the extent that it, respectively, exceeds or falls short of that “satisfactory” standard.

Note: Although you may consult with [Denison’s Writing Center](https://my.denison.edu/web/home-community/campus-resources?gpi=10186), in all other ways you must work alone on this assignment. To earn any credit on this assignment, you must also participate in the Writing Workshop session.

**Good luck, and most importantly, have fun with this assignment! ☺**

Feedback on Writing Style

**Micro Level – “Word” Issues**

1. **Spelling error**
2. **Plural / singular errors**
3. **Ineffective or incorrect punctuation**
4. **Inappropriate change in verb tense**
5. **Poor grammar**
6. **Omitted words/phrases or duplicate or extra words/phrases**
7. **Poor word-choice**
8. **Use subjunctive mood for hypotheticals -** [**https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subjunctive\_mood**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subjunctive_mood)
9. **Redundant use of words (within a sentence or across sentences) without parallelism**
10. **Ineffective use of prepositions: Limit prepositions to no more than two between verbs.**
11. **Preposition at end of sentence: Reserve “stress position” (a sentence’s ending) for more impactful words.**
12. **Ambiguous pronoun use (e.g., to whom does “it”, “s/he”, or “they” refer?)**
13. **Use of “prove” or “proof” (reserve those for complete certainty, i.e., mathematical proof)**
14. **Locating the action - (s/b in the verb) –** [**Use action verbs**](http://www.stlcc.edu/Student_Resources/Academic_Resources/Writing_Resources/Grammar_Handouts/To-be-Verbs.pdf) **rather than “being” verbs such as “is” “are” “was” “were” “have” “had”. Avoid nominalizations.** [**https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nominalization**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nominalization)
15. **Personification or Exaggeration**

**Mid Level – “Sentence” Issues**

1. **Lapse in succinctness (limit sentences to no more than 35 words) (omit the phrase “in order”) See** [**1**](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/572/01/)**,** [**2**](https://twp.duke.edu/uploads/assets/clarity%20and%20conciseness.pdf)**,** [**3**](http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/concise.htm)
2. **Lapse in clarity**
3. **Lapse in coherence or logic: A non-sequitur occurs when a conclusion does not follow from the premise(s).**
4. **Awkward phrasing or informal phrasing**
5. **Ambiguous comparison, ambiguous negation (“not A or B”), or incorrect negation (“all that glitters is not gold”).**
6. **Subject / verb separation – s/b short or zero. Also, minimize the separation between items being contrasted.**
7. **Lapse in parallelism -** [**http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parallelism\_(grammar)**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parallelism_(grammar))

**Macro Level – “Paragraph” Issues**

1. **Ineffective transition between sentences, or paragraphs - Put in the topical position old info that links back to the prior unit of discourse (sentence or paragraph). Put in the stress position new info that you want emphasize to the reader. Also avoid “pseudo transitions” - placing the topical sentence for one paragraph as last sentence in the preceding paragraph.**
2. **Poor organization at the paragraph level. Each paragraph should begin with a topical sentence. Each subsequent sentence must relate to the topical sentence. Each unit of discourse should make a single point: one idea per sentence, one theme per paragraph.**
3. **Idea requires additional development, evidence, or context**
4. **Emphasizes** [**summary**](http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/summary-using-it-wisely/) **or opinion over** [**analysis**](https://www.agnesscott.edu/writingandspeaking/files/documents/W13%20Summary%20versus%20Analysis.pdf)**, synthesis, or** [**argument**](http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/argument/)**. (Connect; Compare / Contrast; Pros / Cons)**